



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County COVID-19 Cases at 66

Wake County is investigating 14 new positive cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of positive test results in Wake County to 66.

“While we continue to learn about new positive cases in our community, our message to you remains the same,” said Dr. Kim McDonald, Wake County medical director. “Practice social distancing, wash your hands, don’t touch your face, and if you feel sick, stay at home and isolate yourself. If we, as a community, can slow the spread of the virus, we can lessen the burden on our healthcare system while protecting our high-risk neighbors.”

Protecting Our Homeless and Vulnerable Populations

Wake County’s response to COVID-19 has focused on keeping residents well-informed and safe. Of course, part of that strategy includes paying particular attention to supporting our most vulnerable people, including our homeless population.

The county has taken steps at the South Wilmington Street Center to reduce the risk of COVID-19 for residents who depend on the county for a place to sleep at night.

“These residents are vulnerable all the time, but they are especially vulnerable right now,” said Lorena McDowell, director of Wake County’s Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization Department. “We understand that we have to think differently to protect them, and that’s what we’re doing.”

Normally, the shelter does not serve lunch, because guests are encouraged to get outside during the day to look for work or attend appointments. But, last week, the South Wilmington Street Center added lunch service in an effort to keep guests at the shelter – their temporary home – and away from germs in the community.

The shelter is also working to promote social distancing. Guests are assigned to specific dorms, and meals are served on a schedule, dorm by dorm, instead of bringing everyone together to eat in the dining hall. If a guest starts showing symptoms of illness, he would be moved to a mitigation dorm, and staff would call Wake County EMS.

Guests have also taken a Slow the Spread Pledge, which asks them to commit to handwashing, social distancing, supporting each other and reporting any symptoms they experience to staff.

In addition, Wake County is thinking creatively about how we can expand not only our sheltering capabilities through public/private partnerships, but also how we can make sure people have access to the services they need, including supporting residents who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and now face homelessness. Details will be provided in the coming days.

Gov. Roy Cooper’s Executive Order

The Wake County State of Emergency Declaration signed yesterday by Board of Commissioners Chairman Greg Ford indicated that nursing homes, long-term care facilities and assisted living centers are required to cease group activities that don’t allow for social distancing.

In addition, the declaration indicated that residents may only have one adult visitor per day, unless it is an end-of-life situation, and the

visitor must go through health screening before entering the building.

Today, however, Gov. Roy Cooper signed an [Executive Order](#) that supplants Wake County's declaration and takes effect at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25.

Under the Governor's order, visitors are not allowed to go to nursing homes, long-term care facilities and assisted living centers for 30 days.

All other Wake County restrictions remain as proclaimed in the [March 22 Declaration](#).

Accessing Wake County Economic and Social Services

Medicaid

To apply for Medicaid, people have four options:

1. Apply online at epass.nc.gov.
2. Mail completed, signed applications to: Wake County Human Services, P.O. Box 46833, Raleigh, N.C. 27620.
3. Fax completed, signed applications to 919-212-7028.
4. Apply by calling 818-212-7000.

Medicaid questions can be emailed to FCMAintake@wakegov.com.

Food and Nutrition Services

To apply for food and nutrition services, people may:

1. Apply online at epass.c.gov.
2. Mail completed, signed applications to: Wake County Human Services, P.O. Box 46833, Raleigh, N.C. 27620
3. Fax completed, signed applications to 919-212-7028.

Questions related to food and nutrition services can be emailed to foodandnutrition@wakegov.com.

If you need to speak to your case worker, call 919-212-7000.

Energy Assistance

Most utility providers are not currently disconnecting service during the COVID-19 outbreak. However, you can obtain an application for energy assistance by calling 919-212-7000 or downloading an [application here](#).

You may apply for the low-income energy assistance program until March 31 by completing [this application](#).

Child Protective Services

The county will no longer accept walk-ins at any location. For questions about child welfare services, call 919-212-7000.

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, call the Wake County report line at 919-212-7990 (English) or 919-212-7963 (Spanish) between the hours of 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.

Childcare Subsidy

To apply for assistance with childcare costs, email childcaresubsidy@wakegov.com. You can call 919-212-7000 or 919-212-7515 with any questions.

Work First Benefits

Work First family assistance assessments and application interviews will be conducted by phone. Please call 919-212-7846 for an interview.

Changes to County Services

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, the health and welfare of our community remains the county's top objective. As a result, the county is pausing or curtailing some services, including:

- **Permits and Inspections:** The time it takes to issue permits and inspections may slow down during this period. The Permit Counter and the GIS (Maps) Counter will only open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- **Regional Centers:** All county regional centers (Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western and Millbrook Human Services Centers) are closed to the public.
- **Veterans Services Office:** Scheduling an appointment in advance is recommended. The office will be open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Falstaff location only.
- **Tax Administration:** The office is open only to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

A full list of changes can be found [here](#).

Staying Updated

Wake County has made it easy for you to stay updated on the latest information about COVID-19.

You can visit our [COVID-19 webpage](#), which has a set of frequently asked questions to educate residents in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#), a list of COVID-19-related [closures and service changes](#), as well as an email address and phone number that people can use to ask personal health-related questions about COVID-19. The county is also sharing important information on its [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

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